Life as an apprentice
Meet Bola, a Solution Engineer Degree apprentice at VMware

_____

From a very young age, I was very passionate about technology and solving problems. I enjoyed the idea of breaking things and solving the problem to fix them. This helped me identify that I wanted a career in the technology industry. However, I was not too sure about the pathway to take.

Why did you choose the apprenticeship pathway?
While studying for my GCSEs and A levels, I discovered I understood subjects better when I could gain experience in the topics. This made me question if my learning style was suitable for university. I began to research the alternative pathways into the technology industry. I spoke to people in the industry, who all emphasised that an apprenticeship is the right decision to pursue.

How did you find your apprenticeship?
I applied for lots of apprenticeships. I searched the government 'Find an apprenticeship' site and company careers websites. This helped me familiarise myself with the different recruitment processes. When I found the role of a Solutions Engineer degree apprentice, I felt like this role was perfect for me as it aligns with my skill set. I found the application process straightforward when applying for the VMware solutions engineer apprenticeship. It started with the initial application, then a telephone interview, followed by an assessment centre and a final interview.

What does a typical day look like?
I started my apprenticeship in September 2021. From day one, I was working on installing and deploying VMware technical solution to our internal environment. This gave me the foundation to enhance my understanding of the platforms and solution tools offered by VMware. Part of my role is to carry out research projects which has supported my knowledge of the IT industry. I present my findings to my colleagues, which have built on my research and presenting skills. I also attended regular team meetings, which I find useful, as they keep me updated on the business and the industry.

How is your apprenticeship delivered?
I attend lectures and seminars at the University of West London once a week. I can access any of the recorded lectures online. I have found going to university one day a week and working at VMware four days a week a good balance. VMware has always supported me and allowed me additional time to focus on my studies if needed.

My Advice to others
I'd say go for it! It has honestly been one of the best decisions I have ever made. I love the fact I can put my skills to good use whilst learning. As long as you are willing to be open to learning and exploring new experiences, you will surely enjoy it. During my time at school, I have learnt that there is no single path to your goal, so be willing to embrace new experiences no matter how daunting they may be.

How do you spend your spare time?
I enjoy playing the guitar in my spare time (even though I am making noise instead of music). Recently, I have enjoyed reading books on the train. This is also something I am trying to incorporate into my daily routine.

What are you proud of?
One of my proudest moments was being able to install and deploy VMware solution on internal systems. I would never have imagined I would be able to do this.